



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THREE SPRINGFIELD RESIDENTS PLEAD GUILTY TO METH CHARGES IN BOONE, GREENE COUNTIES

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that three Springfield residents pleaded guilty in federal court today to charges related to manufacturing methamphetamine in Boone and Greene counties.

William Arthur O’Cull, 43, **Christina Marie O’Cull**, 25, and **Jason Alan Carr**, 28, all of Springfield, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Nanette K. Laughrey this morning to charges contained in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on Dec. 12, 2003.

Both **William** and **Christina O’Cull**, who are married, pleaded guilty to participating in a conspiracy to manufacture 50 grams or more of methamphetamine from March 15, 2001, to Feb. 19, 2003.

Both **William O’Cull** and **Carr** pleaded guilty to being in possession of pseudoephedrine on July 22, 2002, knowing that it would be used to manufacture methamphetamine.

The **O’Culls** both admitted that their involvement in the conspiracy was primarily to obtain pseudoephedrine and other items that would be used by others to manufacture methamphetamine. On more than 100 occasions, Graves said, **William O’Cull’s** brother, co-defendant **Keith Major Shearin**, 34, who currently lives in Springfield and previously lived in Columbia, Mo., paid them to buy pseudoephedrine, batteries, camping fuel and other supplies. The **O’Culls** were paid either in cash or with methamphetamine.

William O’Cull admitted that they frequently traveled to Columbia at **Shearin’s** request, where they purchased numerous boxes of pseudoephedrine pills over a two to three day period. **William O’Cull** also admitted that **Shearin** normally recruited other individuals to purchase pseudoephedrine pills, and that it was not uncommon for **Shearin** to drive five people around at once to buy pseudoephedrine pills at different locations in Columbia and Springfield. **William**

O’Cull estimated that **Shearin** had 15 to 20 people working for him to buy pseudoephedrine pills and other supplies.

Carr and the **O’Culls** were confronted by law enforcement officers on July 22, 2002, after purchasing pseudoephedrine and lithium batteries at a Target store in Springfield. Law enforcement officers searched **Carr’s** vehicle and residence, where they found pseudoephedrine and other items used to manufacture methamphetamine.

On Feb. 13, 2004, **Shearin** pleaded guilty to conspiracy to manufacture 50 grams or more of methamphetamine and to manufacturing methamphetamine. **Shearin** also admitted that he possessed pseudoephedrine knowing it would be used to manufacture methamphetamine on July 17, 2002, and Dec. 20, 2002, in Boone County, Mo. **Shearin** also admitted that he manufactured methamphetamine on the specific dates of Oct. 9, 2002, and Feb. 19, 2003, in Greene County, Mo.

Shearin was initially arrested following a search of his residence by law enforcement officers on July 17, 2002. During the first search, officers discovered various materials and devices used to manufacture methamphetamine, including 54.11 grams of actual pseudoephedrine, lithium batteries, salt, scales and assorted glassware, among other items. **Shearin** was later arrested again at another active methamphetamine laboratory, located in a field, on Feb. 19, 2003. Law enforcement officers had searched his residence again on Aug. 22, 2002, and Sept. 16, 2002, his vehicle on Oct. 1, 2002, and a hotel room occupied by him on Oct. 10, 2002. All of the searches resulted in the discovery of additional materials and devices used in the manufacture and use of methamphetamine. During the searches, officers also discovered a 9 mm semi-automatic handgun in a safe in the defendant’s house.

Under federal statutes, Graves explained, **Shearin** and the **O’Culls** each may be subject to a minimum sentence of 10 years in federal prison without parole up to life in prison without parole. **Carr** may be subject to a sentence of up to 20 years in federal prison without parole. Their sentences will be determined according to the United States Sentencing Guidelines. Sentencing hearings will be scheduled after the completion of presentence investigations by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney C. Douglas Shull. It was investigated by the Columbia, Mo., Police Department, the Missouri State Highway Patrol, the Greene County, Mo., Sheriff’s Department, the Clinton, Mo., Police Department, the Drug Enforcement Administration, MUSTANG, the Mid-Missouri Unified Strike Team And Narcotics Group, and COMET, the Combined Ozarks Multi-Jurisdictional Enforcement Team.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

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